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**ChiArts Foundation Launches in Support of First Public Arts High School in Chicago,
Receives \$1 Million Gift from founders Jim and Kay Mabie**

Chicago, IL — Today, ChiArts Foundation announced its formation as a public charity and fundraising partner to Chicago's first public arts high school, The Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts). The Foundation also announced a generous \$1 million gift from philanthropists and entrepreneurs Jim and Kay Mabie. The Foundation's mission is to support arts education opportunities for, and inspire and nurture current, future, and former students of The Chicago High School for the Arts.

"The success of the school is a team effort. The staff's dedication always inspires Kay and me, and the students' output is remarkable. We believe ChiArts is an endeavor well worth anyone's time and resources and we're happy to support it," said Jim Mabie. The Mabies are two of the School's founders. Mr. Mabie serves on the ChiArts Foundation board and is Chairman Emeritus of the School board. Mrs. Mabie serves on the School board. Sandra Guthman, another ChiArts founder and co-chair of the Foundation's development committee with Elissa Hamid Efroymsen, shared, "ChiArts simply would not be the place it is today without Jim and Kay. Their generosity and leadership are unmatched, and we are so grateful for their meaningful investment as the Foundation starts to build a sustainable future for the arts conservatories."

As Chicago's only tuition-free, pre-professional arts high school, ChiArts aims to disrupt historical biases and inequities within the arts field and the greater community. In the scope of arts programs, ChiArts is the only pre-professional arts high school that actively recruits novice-level students who may not have had access to formal arts training but exhibit a natural ability and desire to hone their skills. ChiArts receives public funding from Chicago Public Schools for its academic programs, while the school's five arts conservatories are supported entirely by private funding raised through the Foundation.

"Following the School's 10th anniversary, the launch of the Foundation was a strategic decision to help ensure the long-term viability of the arts programs that make the school so unique. It enables the continuing separate school board to focus on the myriad educational issues that high schools now face without the burden of fundraising," said Ron Grais, Chair of the ChiArts Foundation board. Cynthia Plouché succeeds Mr. Grais as the Chair of the School board. "I am thrilled to be a part of this journey and to tap into the skills and expertise of our school board. The partnership between the school and the foundation is a rather unique model that we believe will be truly rewarding for the school's sustainability and prosperity," said Plouché.



The School's Founding Executive Director, José Ochoa, will lead ChiArts Foundation as its first President. "The last 12 years have been an unforgettable journey for me. Moving forward as the President of ChiArts Foundation, I look forward to the next chapter in our wonderful school history and am eager to see all the amazing work our students and alumni will create for themselves and others for years to come," said Ochoa. ChiArts' founding principal, Teresa Milsap, leads the School as Principal and Head of School. "I'm honored to lead ChiArts alongside Assistant Principal Abbey Cullen and Artistic Director Tina Boyer Brown, with the support of our passionate faculty and staff. I am also grateful for our partnership with the Foundation and the leadership and support of both boards," said Milsap.

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ChiArts Foundation was established in January 2021 to support arts education opportunities for, and inspire and nurture current, future, and former students of The Chicago High School for the Arts. The Foundation's key objectives are to provide annual support for the High School's Arts Conservatories; create a fund to ensure the sustainability of the Arts Conservatories; raise the School's profile and support outreach through partnerships, and marketing and public relations activities; and increase engagement and build community. The Foundation fosters artistic engagement for prospective ChiArts students through its annual Summer Camp in partnership with the School. ChiArts Foundation also supports current students and alumni in their future paths through professional development, post-secondary planning, and partnerships with a variety of arts organizations. For more general information about the ChiArts Foundation, visit <https://chiarts.org/foundation>

The Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts) is Chicago's first public high school for the arts. With disciplines in creative writing, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, ChiArts provides its scholar-artists with a tuition-free, pre-professional arts training program paired with a college preparatory academic curriculum. ChiArts opened its doors in 2009 and has graduated eight classes of scholar-artists at a rate between 92-100% each year. Learn more about recent ChiArts news and performances on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#). For more general information about ChiArts, visit <https://chiarts.org>